

חכמה ערמה :

O R

WISDOME and PRUDENCE,

Exhibited in a

S E R M O N

Before the Right Honourable

The LORD Chief JUSTICE

R A I N S F O R D,

And the Lord Chief Justice

N O R T H.

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*In their late Western Circuit.*

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*By Tho. Tanner, Rector of Brightstone in Hants.*

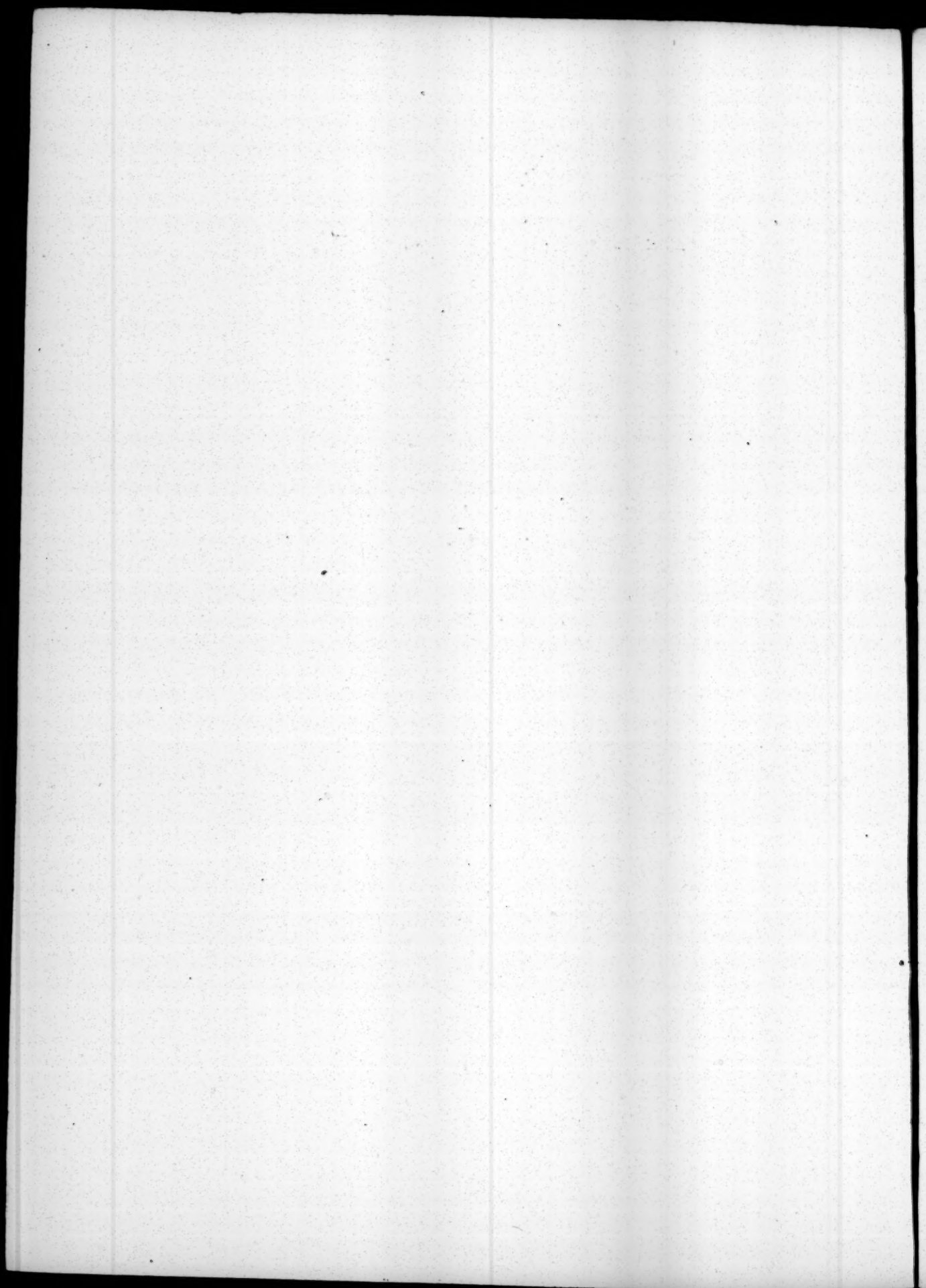
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Οὐ γὰρ ἐπαυχόμεθα τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ τῷ χριστῷ δύναμιν γὰρ θεοῦ ἔσιν εἰς σωτηρίαν παντὸς τοῦ πιστεύοντος. Rom. I. 16.

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Printed for *Thomas Passinger*, at the three Bibles on  
*London Bridge.*

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To the Right Honourable Sir *Courtenay Pole*, Baronet ; Colonel-General of the *Eastern Division* of *Devon*, a Member of the Parliament, &c.

S I R,

**Y**O U may well wonder to be surprized with a Letter from me, which is first exposed unto publick view, together with a Sermon out of date. The acceptance whereof from your Candour, I had no reason to doubt howsoever : but rather how it may be entertained abroad ; since there were no end of printing, if every Sermon that hath been preached in an honourable Audience, were to be divulged. Nor yet did I intend to have done this, having kept it above a twelvemonth by me, without such a thought till now. If my Reader will vouchsafe to know the reasons of it, it was preached at your request, as some part of a Sundayes entertainment, belonging to the Reverend Judges, who were treated otherwise by you, with great Magnificence. If it pleased in the heaing (being but dense of matter) why may it not be more profitable in the reading, and never out of season ? we have heretofore been taken up in comparing spiritual things with spiritual, but since through a surquedry of new models (which did not answer expectation) men have come to take offence at Religion



## The Epistle Dedicatory.

ligion it self, in whatsoever dresse she doth appear : so that we have been reduced to compare even natural things with spiritual ; and by this discourse ( I trust ) it will appear, that the later hath infinitely the more advantages. What others have written lately to the like effect, ought not to withhold me : for the better cause requireth the greater evidence ; and number it self is not despised in the case : besides that a new form is like cloathing of the first matter with a new existence. Which is all the apology that I need to make unto the publick, more then others that have gone before ; especially confessing, that private reasons joined with it, did over-poise me.

Such as these : you were lately my Mecœnas, and your brave house, and Family my Municipium, wherein I did enjoy much liberty, and priviledge. You were also a part of my late charge, which I was forced to leave more abruptly then I intended, and so, there remaineth to me now no other way of preaching to you, besides this. So that I send it as a kind of token to you first, and by you to the rest, to make up some part of my Apology ; and to return to you with such a foot as I had left, to set forward ( being enclosed with the Sea ) such an one as is shod with the wings of Mercury, of which we use to make our pens. In fine. it is almost the only way, that men of our condition have to testifie their gratitude unto Persons of your Quality ( to coin somewhat that may bear the superscription of your names ) which lies the more upon me, since your respects have so often followed me hither : which seldome happens when interest, and Relation cease. Let this therefore pass by your hand, and it will adde more to the great cumble of favours, wherein you have still taken pleasure to oblige,

Sir,

Brightston in the Isle  
of Wight Sept.

24. 1677.

Your most affectionate and  
faithful Servant  
Thomas Tanner.





Prov. 8. 12.

*I Wisdome dwell with Prudence.*

**T**His is gracious condescension of *Wisdom* ( by which name all the World imagines an high *Soverain*, or a kind of *Deity* to be intended ) to tell us *where she dwelleth*. Every one might think, that he knew before ; yet all are in the quest still, and few do find it, because she dwells with *Prudence*. A Lady that doth often change her seats, and delight her self in labyrinths, which are in-accessible, without a certain *clue*. But since *Wisdom* seeme to be (as it were) at board with *Prudence*, whether is the greater ? which of these is the *Dowager*, and which the *Daughter* ? might it not as well have been said, *I prudence dwell with wisdom*, as *I wisdom dwell with prudence* ? if the King say, I dwell in my *Court* : and the *Court* say, *I am wheresoever the King is* ; which is the readiest enquiry to bring us into the presence of the *Royal Majesty* ? so when wisdom tells us, that she dwells with prudence, and an imprudent man knows not where that is, what is he the *wiser* for this direction ?

The truth is, it is not fit, that the man which wanteth wisdom, should find it without some certain travel : for, *she is to be sought for as Silver, and searched for as* Chap. 2. 4.  
hidden

Mach. 13. 45.

*hidden treasures.* Nay, to be concealed too, after finding ; as the Merchant did by the *rich pearl*, found in the *midst of a Field*, till he could purchase all together ; least another man should come between him, and his prize.

What shall we do ? shall we preserve the state of *wisdom* any longer ? or put the *clue* immediately into your hands, that we may all proceed together, to wait at the gates of wisdom ? we are in haste ; let me loose no time to do it !

Job 28. 28.

Wisdom is the same, that we call *Religion*, the way of happiness here, and hereafter ; and she dwells with Prudence, that is, in the breasts of such as will obey her. For, unto man he said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to depart from evil, that is understanding, or a right Prudence. In Philosophy, Wisdom is the knowledge of choice things, and Prudence is a practical disposition of applying so much of it unto use, as may do a man good, when the case requireth. This maketh men to enlarge their studies ; that if it be possible, they may not be to seek in any case to know, when they should be ready to do. So though wisdom be the greater, yet Prudence entertains her, to her own profit, and is never able to exhaust her treasures. What availeth knowledge, if a man have not a present mind to do himself good by it ?

Ὁς ἐστὶν ἡ μά-  
θησις ἀνὴρ  
ὁ σοφὸς παρὰ

So likewise in Divinity, wisdom is the knowledge of the Word of God, which is unsearchable : and Prudence is a right obedience to it, which hath no bounds, nor limits. Let us therefore measure our steps from hence, from one degree to another ; and when we come near enough to be informed ; no doubt, but we may find our selves to be arrived unto some attainment higher, then to what the world doth call its own wisdom, or its own pretended virtues whatsoever. And the first hint to be observ'd is this.

Point.

*Point. 1.* That *Religion* is no carnal *Policy*, or wisdom; but Wisdom of God himself.

Distinguish of *Religion* natural, or Christian: it holds in either of them. Be it true or degenerate, so much as there is of *Religion* in the breasts of men, it is of God and not of men, and it is the first Wisdom in the World.

Let us put this first principle out of doubt, because it has been questioned, whether there be any *religion* at all by nature, or whether that which is, hath entred meerly thorough Art, and Policy; the wiser taking advantage of the ignorance; and the stronger of the fears of the simpler sort, for ends of their own. Let me pitch my banner here a little, while I labour to reduce this skonce, which it is not safe to leave behind me.

I say then, that there are certain common Principles, or notions of *religion*, imprinted by nature ( which is the immediate work, or *protoplasm* of the Divine wisdom, and power) in the hearts of all men indeleibly. Which notions, though possibly they may be tainted at the very spring-head, by idolatrous, or erroneous education; yet so much as there is of *religion*, to be discerned thorough these, it is of God, that did at first implant it, and ever since maintain it, in the hearts of men; that he himself might be justified; and such as obey it not, may be judged by it, and left without excuse. So that, this must needs be the Wisdom of God in men, and no humane policy.

For else, whereas it hath been said, that fear at first, brought in all *religion*, it might have been shewed by such, as have written *de primis rerum inventoribus*, of the Authors, and beginnings of all Arts, and Sciences; Primus in orbe deos fecit timor.

B

when



when *religion* also had its first beginning. But this they could not do, though they could tell when *Saturn*, *Jupiter*, and the rest of their greater Deities began to be worshipped: an argument, that worship, or *religion* was before Idolatry.

Much less, can they tell when such fear began, as they conceive to have been the cause of *religion*: as sure an argument, that it had no beginning, but in that nature, which God created at the first, after his own image. Of this *Moses* alone hath given us the right knowledge, but if any one had rather credit the Hea-then Poets, or Historians (which are many ages junior unto him) the eldest of them describe unto us the superstition of the Gentiles, which was their *religion*; and their superstition ever was *meticulous*: but I say, which of these hath shewed us, when this tardy humor had its first Original? Therefore it was *ab origine*.

Again, if *religion* were but of humane policy; it could not have passed thorow all Nations, and that, thorow all ages hitherto. *Quæ regio in terris? ubi gentium? ubi temporis, aut loci?* in what Countrey, or at what time, was there no *religion* amongst the inhabitants of the Earth? as for his own age, and all before, which he had ever heard, or read of, *Cicero* hath testified; that *although some barbarous people wanted walls and Laws; yet none were without some sort of Religion*. Before him, the great *Stagyrite*, unworthily suspected of *Atheism*; and below him, *Seneca*, and *Plutarch*; and indeed, as many before, and after, as have written any thing at all only, of later times, since new discoveries, a few barbarous people have been questioned; but the relators are not agreed.

But suppose the generality of the vulgar could have been imposed upon in this kind; certainly, some of the

Hesiod. &c.

Quæ est gens,  
aut, quod  
genus homi-  
num, quod non  
habeat sine do-  
ctrina, antici-  
pationem  
quandam deo-  
rum, Cic. i de  
nat. deorum,  
Nulla gens tam  
fœta, cuius men-  
tem non imbu-  
erit deorum o-  
pinio. Tuic.  
qu. i.

Nulla gens in-  
quam est adeo  
extra leges,  
meresque pro-  
jecta, ut non  
aliquos deos  
credat. Sen.

Ep. 117.

πάντες αὐτοὶ πο-  
τε θεῶν  
ἐκείνων πάλαι  
ἄριστ' ἰδεοῦσι  
τοῦ μὲν εἶναι  
θεὸς οὐκ ὁμοίως π-  
θεῖναι Plut. in  
amator. &c.

the Philosophers, who had searched into Nature, and the Policies of States, could easily have discovered this imposture; and would have adventured to atchieve so great a glory, as to have redeemed their own sects, & followers from the muffler of the common people: yet, we meet with none so bold, as to deny a Deity, besides one *Diagoras*, who could not make a Sect; but affected rather (like that mad-fellow, who burnt the Temple of *Diana*, only that he might be talked of, after he was dead, whatsoever he suffered for it,) to be infamous for ever, among the Heathen themselves, then to dye in his obscurity. And one *Epicurus* only, denyed a special providence; making a Sect in other *Tenents*, but never able to prevail with any of them, not to pray in a storm, or tempest, which *Plutarch* doth retort upon them. But rather, as the Poet did observe. *Hi sunt* Plut. adv. epicur.  
*qui trepidant, quos omnia fulgura terrent.*

Now, some of these have looked upon *religion*, as a great trouble unto States, and private persons; and laboured to set men free from the apprehensions of it: had it been but of Art, or humane Wisdom, what should hinder but they might have done it, one time or another, since the lower Sects, as the humour of respective ages took, did oft surmount the reputation of the greater? but it could never go this way. Uc passim est videre in La-cretio.

If it be suggested, that the Philosophers were deterred by the example of *Socrates*, from intermeddling with this mystery of Government, what deterr'd the Martial men, and Politicians, from age to age, why they durst not meddle with it; why were they held by these cob-webs? nay, why more fast then others? not to speak of the *Grecians* (because the time will not permit) who were more superstitious then the *Romans*. Among these later, who so superstitious, as *Camillus*, and the

*Decij*, and the *Curij*, and the *Fabij*, and the *Scipio's*, and the *Catoes*; and the rest of greater note? only, *Cæsar* seemed to despise the auguries, yet, he was not a little troubled at the little river *Rubicon*.

Lucan l. 1.

Plut. in vitis

*Numa*, and *Lycurgus* founded their estates, and governments by superstitious rites, using them only as an hawk upon the people; and dissembling things that were not true; which they themselves neither feared, nor beleived. It may be so; doth it hence follow, that *religion* is but a stalking horse, or stratagem of Policy? nay, it rather followeth, that if the sense of some *religion* had not been before, most strongly grounded in the minds of the generality of men, there could have been no policy (of which the *Atheist* would seem to be more fond then any other) in laying that upon them, which either would not take, or could not hold. It had been in vain to go about to establish a *religion*, if there had not been such a disposition in the people before, as we have hinted. Certainly, *Numa* could not infuse such a disposition into the minds of men, that were born before him (many of which he governed) but had he brought the people to a form, for a time; it had dyed with him: or, when that *form* of *policy* had ceased, either that form of *religion*, or all *religion*, if it had been but a meer imposture, had ceased with it.

In the issue it remains, that as men were never of any other mind, but that by force, or choice, they must have some *religion*; so, they are never like to have any other power, or inclination, for the future: let the *Atheist* try his art, or power to the utmost! but, though more may be made of *religion*, then there should; yet there is so much of it written in humane nature; that as the statuary engraved his own name in his work, so that no one could efface it, without the demollishing of

of



of the whole; so no humane wit, or malice, can obliterate *religion* out of humane nature, without the destruction of humanity together with it, because it is of an higher impress; even the devise, and the motto of Almighty God in all his reasonable Creatures. To come to the Christian *religion* in particular. In this indeed was the manifold wisdom of God made manifest above the rest. Among the Gentiles there were as many Gods, as Nations, as many Idols as there were Hills, and Vallies. And they worshipped one anothers Gods, when they came into one anothers Country (even as some of our gentile Protestant-travellers make no matter, to bow to every Popish *Relique* where they passe) there was no enmity betwixt Idolaters upon the account of their *religions* (only all abhorred the true worshippers) but rather, *Athens* sent to *Egypt* to learn what they could of their absurd Rites, and Mysteries; and the great Philosophers commented upon their *hieroglyphicks* or sacred *sphinges*; even as wise men make morals upon some foolish fable. *Rome* again translated her laws, and rites from *Athens* first, and then from other places, till the City began to be so full of *religions*, that the Senate was fain to take order against admitting more. But when the Christian *religion* come to be set on foot, it soon reduced all to one.

That you may perceive the wisdom, and the power of God therein, and have the better prospect into wonder: take account in what posture the world stood, when the Gospel first began to be divulged.

Our Lord himself, the Son of a Carpenter (as he was reputed) preached three years; and then was so disgraced by the crosse, and the malice of his own Countrey-men; that one would have thought, there had been an end of him, and of all his new Doctrine; yet he left  
twelve

twelve Fishermen behind him to uphold it, for which they were to dye too. The Jews hated these, beyond any patience: the *Gentiles* had them at first, in derision, after in suspicion. Whither should they go? or what should they do? must they perswade the *Jews* against the Law of *Moses*? this they must do. Must they perswade the *Gentiles* to abandon their Idolatry? the Gods which they feared, and lov'd; the magnificence of sumptuous shows, and Temples, and such feastings as they chiefly used after sacrifice and oblations? this they must do. A likely matter to take effect, or to take the world by so much as by the little finger.

Act. 5. 37.

Could these, or any of their followers raise an army? it is hard to imagine out of what quarters: but what if they could? had they then been but once beaten (as *Gamaliel* did observe) they had been for ever quelled: or, if they had prevailed, and attained to an Empire (as some have arose from small beginnings) yet their fate might have been like that of all before, and since. Which did you ever read of, that hath lasted 1600 years with advantage, and rooted it self so invincibly in *Asia*, *Europe*, *Africa*, and *America*, still proceeding conquering, and to conquer? which besides, did ever possess any one of these; and, next consider how and what way Christianity is bound to subdue them all.

Rev. 13. 10.

1 Tim. 2. 1. 2.

By Faith, and patience; by prayers, and intercessions for all men: *especially for Kings and all that were in Authority over Christians, that under them, they might lead a quiet, and peaceable life in all Godliness, and honesty.* O ridiculous Wisdom in the eye of carnal policy; and yet it over-swayed all!

In above 300 years we read of no insurrection of theirs against oppression, though they swarmed in all Provinces of the Empire long before that: the *Roman* legions

legions were full of *Christian* Soldiers, and never mutinied; though \* *Constantine* came with the greater favour to the Imperial Crown, because he was a *Christian*, and so many of his *Veterans* of the same profession. \* He began his reign A.D. 310

So that Prophecy was accomplished: *Not by might, or army, (as the Turkish Empire, and religion) but by my Spirit, Saith the Lord. Which turned the heart of the Fathers to the Children, and the heart of the Children to the Fathers, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people, prepared for the Lord.* Zech. 4. 6. Mal. 4. 6. Luk: 1. 17.

But it may be, that which was wanting in an army might be supplied by policy?

One might think so indeed, if the greater number of the wise, and potent men of the world had taken this way. . But *St. Paul* (who had his hand from the beginning in this work, and had the best experience of it) witnesseth after this manner. *The foolishness of God is wiser then men: for ye see your calling, Brethren, how that not many wise men after the Flesh; not many mighty, not many noble are called, though some of all these.* 1 Cor. 1. 25.

Instead of aids therefore, put into the contrary balance; that all the might, and policy of the world; all that enraged *Jews*, and *Idolaters* could do, was set against it. And yet, (by a new example) men delighted to dye for religion, which was never known before, at least, amongst the *Gentiles*: and out of their blood (as out of the Teeth that *Cadmus* sowed) an innumerable power of supplies rose out of the earth. Of which it was foretold, that it should befriend *the Woman*, and help her, *swallowing up that flood, which the dragon cast out of his mouth to drown her.* Like *Hydra's* heads cut off one, and more started up in the stead of it: persecution wrought nothing but encrease, as mowing maketh the grasse to grow. It wrought nothing else but



but a sweeter smell, and savour to *Christianity*: even as when a roller is driven o're a walk of Camomil, what could it avail to hinder?

I have said but little yet (though it tend to admiration) let the unbeliever mark, and be astonished at that, which follows.

Said not the proud *Affyrian* to the servants of King *Hezekiah*; *Have any of the Gods of the Nations delivered at all his Land* (for every Nation then made choice of some especial *Numen* to be their Protector) *out of the hand of the King of Affyria: where are the Gods of Hamath and of Arphad? where are the Gods of Sepharvaim?* but now, where are the Gods of *Affyria* it self? We need such a learned Antiquary as your *Selden*, to let us know their names. Where are the Gods that *Greece*, and *Rome* adored; why is there never a Temple (at the least) of *Jupiter's* remaining, who was styled the Father of Gods, and men? what ailed thee, O thou dreadful Oracle at *Delphos*, that thou madest such pitiful excuses (as thou didst) and then retired'st with the rest (who made none) to everlasting silence, to deceive the world no more? it was not because ye were dis-obliged by the Heathen all the world over, at the same time. It was because ye could not choose: it was not because there was an earthly power to depresse ye; but another spirit, which ye were not able to with-stand. Rise again, if ye are able, to answer these reproaches! that part of the world is forced to bow with you, which is not ready to adore!

More closely to the case in hand still: how came the despised Land of *Jewry* to send a *Law* forth to all the world, and yet themselves to be dissipated so, as never people were and this has lasted above these 1600 years, wherein (however) as there is not a *Roman* left, so there

1 Kings 18.33.

Libro de Dis  
Syris.

Plut. de orac.

not a Jew lost; but there is a mark upon them. A mighty people, if they could be gathered: but they are cast far back for that, for it is not like to be, *till thefulness of the Gentiles is come in.* Rom. 11. 25.

There is now but one God, and where *Mahomet* is professed, *Christ* is also acknowledged to have been a great Prophet before Him: and they have the history of the Gospel, upon which they raise their damned idol, which is confounding evidence against these *Apostates* from the Faith; and together with it, confounders of that civility, that was in the world before.

This one God is worshipped according to the *Law*, which he gave from the beginning of the world, which no false *religion* can pretend to in the least. Before, there was no enmity betwixt nations on the account of *religion*: but now, it is the greatest point, and ground of amity, or enmity. As it was said in *Genesis*, *I will put enmity between thy Seed, and between her Seed.* Gen. 3. So more expressly in the Gospel, our Lord himself doth testifye, saying, *I came not to send Peace upon the Earth, but a sword,* and to set men at variance upon this account of *religion* only. Which many *States-men*, having well observed, would fain have taken another order with *religion*, if they had been able; but it was too far above them. *Christianity* hath abolished *Idolatry*, *Philosophy*, *Policy*, and brought in other orders, and Governments among the Nations, then the *wise-men* of the world allowed. All which doth shew, and prove; that the *Christian religion* is the *wisdom* of God above all; and not of man: that as it was rais'd at first, so it doth still subsist by miracles, and therefore is invincible; so that *the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it.* Matth. 16. 18.

But, since we have said so much concerning this *wisdom*, viz. that it hath abolished, not *Idolatry* only,  
C but

but *Philosophy*; not the *Jewish* Law alone, but the *civil*; not established governments, but subverted them not brought in *peace* but *war*, it is high time, that we take some caution concerning *prudence*, with which this *wisdom* is said to dwell; least she be misprised for a destroyer of the house, wherein she liveth; since such things as these cannot consist with *prudence*. Let us therefore passe to the second, and the last point, to shew.

*Point. 2.* That this *wisdom* dwells with *prudence*, and is the best *policy*: for so saith the context, and find out the *knowledge of witty inventions*, that is, the choice expedients of felicity for all estates.

What though the *Christian religion* hath beaten down the galleries of the *Cynicks*, *Stoicks*, *Skepticks*, *Epicureans*, and all other *heresies* of true *Philosophy*, as well as the Altars of the Idols? yet, it hath no more abolished *Philosophy*, rightly so called, then it hath *religion*. But rather, since the spreading of *Christianity*, *multi transe-runt, & aucta est scientia*. Many have travelled to augment learning, and to redeem *Philosophy* from all the errors, wherein it was before entangled.

Col. 2. 2.

St. Paul exhorteth the *Colossians*, to beware least any man should spoil them through *Philosophy*, and vain deceit, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ: for though all the Sects called themselves the *Philosophers*, and theirs the *Philosophy*; even as our Sects in religion do imitate the ancient usurpation; yet it is plain, that the Apostle cautions them against no other *Philosophy*, but such as is *vain deceit*, and opposite unto the simplicity of the Faith of Christ; which no real knowledge is.

verse 22.

Again, he admonisheth them against a *shew of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body*. It is but the *shew of wisdom*, which really is not such, that



that he cautions them against; especially such a shew, as ministr'd before to Heathen superstition, and being brought into the *Christian Church*, might tend to corrupt it with the old leaven, *the rudiments of the world*.

In the mean time, he himself disputed with the Stoicks, and Epicureans, and other *Philosophers*, according to their own Notions, which he had learned at the feet of *Gamaliel*; being as conversant in the Learning of the *Greeks*, as *Moses* had been before in that of the *Egyptians*. The rest of the Apostles were Acts 7. 22. endued from above with tongues, and all knowledge; so that they were reputed at the first, amongst the *Gentiles*, as a new sect of *Philosophers*.

In the next succession, the prime Fathers of the Church were of the converted *Rhetors*, and *Philosophers*, as *Ignatius*, *Clemens*, *Irenæus*, *Justin Martyr*, *Athenagoras*, *Tertullian*, *Origen*, *Lactantius*, and divers others. What hath since been added to the magazine of learning, I may safely leave to be demonstrated by the *ROYAL SOCIETY*.

What if the *Christian religion* hath almost antiquated the *Civil Law* in divers Countries? it is only so far as it hath abolish'd slavery, and brought in *Christian liberty*, even in civil things, wheresoever a *Christian Government* has been established. Neither has it subverted any other, but to bring in better, and a sweeter order. As may appear at this day, by comparing *Christendome*, howsoever corrupted, with the *Turkish*, or *Pagan dominations*. Wheresoever the *Christian yoke* lyeth not on Princes, and their Governments, they are barbarous, and cruel: whereas in *Christendom*,

*dom*, (especially amongst the Princes, and the States of the Reformation) there is more property, immunity, and privilege to the lower states: and in case of trespassse, there are more pardons, and impunities: in case of punishment, more mercy, Malefactors are chastised, or put to death with the lesse severity, and horreur; and the poor are not exposed.

Eph. 2. 2.

\* Qui præmia,  
& triumphos  
decevere, se-  
cundum nu-  
merum hosti-  
um occisorum.

In a word; though by accident, *Christianity* draw the hatred of the un-beleiving world, as being opposed to the power of Satan, *who worketh in the children of disobedience*: yet, it hath made even wars themselves more gentle, then they were before, both in sieges, and in battels, sparing the effusion of blood (which the \* *Romans* glorified in) affording ransom, enslaving none of the *Christian* profession. And where they trespassse (possibly) upon *Christian* tenderness in enslaving *Turkes*, or *Infidels*; they seem to make some amends by better usage of them, then our own poor Captives do expect in *Barbary*.

Content (may some one say) we are for *religion*, and for the *Christian* too above all; but not with such *hankes* as are put upon us, under this pretence, to the prejudice of civil life; and thefore, contrary unto common prudence.

Si violandum  
est jus, regnan-  
di causa. *Cæsar*  
ex *Epist.*

And first, because it is an hindrance to preferment, to be held to such rules as may be given us: if a Kingdome, or a great estate or fortune, lye before me; must I let another carry them before me, if there be but a scruple about the title, or the circumstances of proceeding? if I have made a promise; must I keep it to my own wrong?

*Machi-*

*Machiavel* observes, that those Princes have been but *de principe*. unfortunate, who have suffered themselves to be hampered by a word, or to be in earnest, too *religious* [*but he is very unfortunate himself in the instances, which he giveth of some, that seemed to have prospered by their false-nesse, and impiety.*] What shall we return to this?

We say first, that, that which hath been called *vertue* (for the most part) is a certain strain of natural *piety*, even in the Heathens, so far as it can go: and that such of those (whether private men, or Princes) as lived most according unto true *vertue*, were the most prosperous, and glorious. But because the lives of private men are apt to be buried in obscurity, after a small time; let us take account of Princes, whose memories remain sacred, when they have done *vertuously*; as their persons were before (whether they were *Pagan*, or whether they were *Christian*) while the issues hung in suspense, and the ages under awe, wherein they lived.

Who can be compared with *Augustus*, *Titus*, *Trajan*, *Antoninus*, *Constantine* the great, and the rest of better note? as for the vitious monsters of the Empire, who by ambition, and deceit attain'd, and managed the sway for a time; which of them came to a timely end? as for those that retained wicked policies with a shew, and some pretence of *vertue*: which of these did not spoil all the rest thereby? I cannot stand to speak of *Tiberius*, *Galba*, *Severus*, *Julian*, and others of them. Much lesse, to verifie the same from our own Chronicles (which might seem to exceed the lists of my profession) to leave to every one their own.

We



We say again, that looking upon examples in the Scripture; we have found none to have flourished like those, that had the zeal of true *religion*; as *David*, *Solomon*, *Asa*, *Jehosaphat*, *Hezekiah*, &c. Only, good *Josiah* perished at the last, by admitting a little *policy*, to be temper'd with his *piety*: and out of a Princely emulation (as it might be thought) in his youth, to shew his valor.

On the other side, the wicked Princes fell by their own vices; and had been likely so to do, though there had been none but men to punish them. The Princes that compounded, or confounded their pretences to *religion* with other *policies*, fell ever short of their own designs, which they pursued, under the veil, or mask of hypocrisie; as *Saul*, and *Jeroboam*, and *Jehu*, and *Amaziah*, and the rest.

Then comes another in, with such a complaint as this, to render this *pretended prudence* of ours to be but *foolishness* (according to their shallow reasonings) shall I part with a certainty for an uncertainty? quit my delights, and pleasures to embrace Melancholy, and to solace my self with deaths-heads, and Coffins set before me, while I walk in youth, or strength? shall I bind a carcase to my living body, and go about with it, like a ghost, through the terrour of a resurrection, and a future judgment, whilst it seems to common observation, that death is but a meer extinction; and as such, despised by the bravest men?

First, it is *Popish superstition*, that hath painted out *religion* in solitudes, and penances: and it is the modern *Catharism* only, that hath sequestred it from society, and civili-

civility; wherein the highest satisfactions of life consist; and certainly, men are rendred the more civil, and not the less, by a right temper of *religion*, which is *wisdom* dwelling in the Court of *prudence*, the bond of all humanity. So that impiety doth but put an ugly visard on *religion*, or cloath it in a Bears-skin, to work its prejudice, when it sets it forth after this manner. It is far from being sad, and melancholy, when it is rightly understood; but is rather to be described, as the *Christian Philosopher* describe *wisdom*, to be like a woman of a Matronly-look, having piercing eyes, and a lively colour; and though far above our age, seeming yet to retain the flower of her youth.

Again, there is no certainty to be parted with by a religious life, seeing all other things are uncertain here, unless it be this truth; that all good things are the certain free gifts of God, dispensed much according to meet rewards of *piety and vertue*: and so it often goeth, whilst all the superfluity of divine bounty, being no way prodigal, is unaccountable unto men. But uncertainty there can be none about the future hopes, and fears, till any man hath answered the evidence, which we have given in before of the *Christian religion*. Which we also presume to be unanswerable by all the wits of men, though they were even granted a *Bacchanalian* liberty.

Let us cast up the compt (if you please) on either hand, what mischief comes by *irreligion*, and what benefits do accompany an unfeigned *Christian Piety*.

First, An *irreligious* life, through private lusts, and passions, destroyeth bodies, and estates, and the publick

Boeth. de consol. phil. sophia. l. i. Mulier reverendi admodum vultus, oculis ardentibus, colore vivido, atque in exhausti vigoris, quamvis ita ceteri plena foret, ut nullo modo nostrae crederetur aetatis.

lick weal ; which are all saved, and advanced by the *prudence*, and goodness of a *Christian* life, how many bodies have been ruined by intemperance, and lust? but who was ever hurt by Continence and Abstinence? How many men have perished by the persecution of revenge? but who ever came to any great disaster by gentleness, and patience? How many estates have been confounded by a prodigal profusion upon vanities? but what estate did ever suffer by frugality, with an abhorrency from all vain-glory, and impertinent delights? what confusion hath it brought into States, and Kingdoms, when particular persons, having power in their hands, have dis-regarded, and hindred the publick good, for their private ends, and satisfactions? but when was the State ever hurt by a publick spirit, and by self-denial? the ungodly life of a few men bringeth judgments on the land; but the Godly life of fewer stinteth the divine wrath, and bringeth blessings, not only on themselves, but on many more.

2. An *irreligious* life bringeth men under great bondage; but a religious life (according unto this *prudence*) doth set them free, and far above all fears, or the causes of them. The one is in bondage unto meats, and drinks, *to make provision for the Flesh*; enough to furnish out a voyage: not (as it is usually pretended) for hospitality, but because he wants them: whereas *nature* is contented with a little, and *piety* with lesse. The one is tempted with the forbidden fruit, and is in bondage, because he will be satisfied; though it be through dishonour, and a cumble of inconveniences. But unto purer minds there ariseth little trouble of this kind: either their mind is free from the power of such temptations; or else, it is purged by repentance, and every  
lust



lust is mortified. The one cannot live comfortably (as he conceives) without his lusts, and the other cannot live at all with them.

The weight of an ungodly mans bondage follows yet (as the wain must follow the wheels.) When an ungodly man hath pursued his ambition, pride, revenge, covetize, or any of his pleasures to the heighth; he is still so far from being satisfied, that he is rather sad and discomposed, partly through *vanity* of the Creature, and partly through the remorse of his Conscience, reflecting upon so much of the *vanity* of Sin, as he is sensible of, in the things that he hath acted, or wherewithal he was affected for the time. So, that instead of recovering himself by reason, and by resolution, he is usually re-mitted to the same disease to be healed, as they say, that a second burning of the finger will cure the first. Now, if this part of a mans soul (if I may divide it into parts) troubled the *Heathen* themselves (as I cannot stand to cite sentences, and instances, that might be quoted out of Authors) how much more, may I presume, it may do in such, as have heard the Gospel preached all their dayes, from which they cannot choose, but to have received some impressions, howsoever impregnable they may pretend to be.

. In a word, whereas true *religion* pacifies the conscience, and alone is able to render that tranquillity of mind, which the *Gentiles* sought in vain; an *irreligious* life maketh men *meticulous*, as oft as the wind doth blow, or the clouds are rent with thunder. A *religious* man is in peace at home, *impavidum ferient ruinæ*; The end of the world will be no amazement to him; though the heavens fall, or glow with fervent fire, as they must

do at the last, he is not to be dismayed by it.

Thirdly and Lastly, There is as much latitude in *Christian prudence*, as a wise man could wish : For there is nothing in *religion*, that makes against a right *prudence* ; nay, it comprehendeth all, and far excelleth human *prudence* : you cannot instance in a case, wherein you may not be, the best resolved. Hence *Philosophers* have prescribed much austerity, and *Idolaters* have used (and do use) great severity, but the *Christian Religion* required nothing, but what is gentle, and agreeable unto nature, and civility. There is enough in it to preserve the Temporal felicity, and to augment it. Enjoy as much of the goods, that God hath given you, as will do you good : and be sure, if God had not known better then we, what was good for us, he would have allowed to us the larger size.

Some restraints indeed, we must acknowledge, but such as are for our greater priviledge, and enlargement another way. Some think it a restraint if they may not riot, but if they do, it spoileth bodies, and estates : others, that there is no Community ; but where there is most impunity for that, the blood is most corrupted. Others, that polygamy (at least) is not permitted ; but where it is, it engendreth unto feuds, more then unto love. And when community was once too much indulged, the *Romans* were fain to provide by law, that every man of such a quality, should have (at least) one wife. The Laws of God therefore are the *basis* of all other *prudence*, the establishment of the earth ; such as far exceeded those of all other Nations, to make both the publick ; and the private man the happier, so that every way it is the better *policy*.

I think

I think our own Law approves of it, and hath this rule, *Lex Dei est lex terræ* ; The Law of God is the Law of the Land : and that, there is no such preamble to any of our Statutes, as, *nos mitigantes rigorem juris divini*, &c. do enact, that it shall not be accounted murder in a Noble man, if he kill a Paisan. If it were so, it would not only be a violation of *religion*, but much against the *policy* of ENGLAND.

Referente mihi  
nobili Polono  
de sua gente.

Certainly then this *Christian prudence* cannot interfere with the Civil, because it doth not only farre surmount, but comprehend it. It hath been said, that all *virtue* is comprised in justice : much more in *piety*, which is not only the greatest motive unto justice ; but the *primum mobile*, a superiour orbe, that doth contain, and carry it about with its own motion. Whatsoever therefore makes against *piety*, makes as much against justice, and all other virtues, and as much against the felicity of mankind, even in this civil life.

Εν δὲ διακο-  
σύνῃ συλλήβ-  
δην πᾶς ἀρετῇ  
σι.

Adde to this the *vantage*, we have shew'd, that true *religion* laies but few and light restraints ; but it opens such enlargements of happiness, and fruition, on another hand, as are neither to be counted by curious observation ; nor yet to be exprest, or uttered by the tongues of men, and Angels,

What if I should resume my text (but that it is too late) to be expounded *mystically*, and yet without an *allegory* ? you see that *wisdom* and *prudence* are here set forth as two persons : and *prudence* for her part as if she had an house large enough to entertain *wisdom*. What if I should say, upon the whole, that it is not obscurely signified by this ; that *Christ*, the Son of God, the



Rom. 8. 18.

*wisdom* of the father, dwelleth in them that do believe, by his own spirit? whereby he is as much the soul of their souls, as their souls are the life of their bodies: and so doth prompt, and inspire them by his grace, in such a manner, that they shall not only, not lightly forego, or so much as slip any point, that tendeth to their happiness temporal, or eternal (for, *all things work together for good to them that love God*) but doth also fill them full of such inward joys, as *carnal wisdom* is not able to conceive.

Such as have been addicted to their studies, have

Ἡ λειτουργία αὐτάρκεια οὐδὲ  
τὴν θεωρητικὴν μάστιγ'  
ἀνείηδον τε ἡ εὐδαιμονία  
ἐν τῇ ᾧ εἶναι  
Ad Nicom. l. 10. cap. 7.

placed the chiefest felicity of life in contemplation (we must suppose that a man be of sufficiency to be vacant to it, and to make his choice of what he liketh) because

this is the pleasure of the mind. So our master *Aristotle*, although his own speculations were but dry ( *ἡ θεωρία, ἡ ἀληθὴς* ) But *Seneca* distinguisheth betwixt that part of Philosophy, which is conversant about the natural questions, and that which riseth up to the researches, that are concerning God; speaking of this later as being above the other, as much as the Heaven is above the Earth: yet he moveth only such remote questions of contemplation as these are, what the nature of God is; and whether he be wholly intent upon himself, or hath sometimes regard to us: pronouncing (notwith-

\* Altior est hæc, & animosior, & multo hanc caliginem in qua volutamur, excedit, & e tenebris creptos illò producit, unde lucet. *prol. nat. quest.*

standing) of this later part, that it is more \* high, and spritely then the other: and such as wraps us up above this darkness, wherein we were mantled before

as in thick clouds, and brings us near unto that light, from

from whence it self doth shine, Such pleasures did they pretend to take in their poor, and low sentiments of Philosophy, the highest of which do hardly reach the threshold of Divinity !

The Poets seemed to be full of one of the nine Goddesses, the Muses, and to take great pleasure in it, when their *Genius* worked kindly towards verses : and therefore used to begin their poems with a prayer to one, or other of them, which was counted most propitious unto such a *vein*, or *strein* of Poesy, as they then intended. The Heathen Priests in their Temples gloryed in being possessed with the *Dæmon*, strutting in the *Pentralia*, like the bird of *Juno*.

*Cicero* delighted in the notion of immortality : but it was of name only : that of the Soul he accounted as a problem. Of death he therefore maketh the less account, (as other of the Heathens) who thought it but indifferent, because it brought as much good, as evil with it. In Parad.

*Cato* was much taken with *Socrates* his discourses about the immortality of the soul, when he was about to kill himself : and uttered strange, and admirable sayings to the Heathen hearers : yet he dreamed not of a resurrection, an Heaven ; or but only of *Elysian* fields, or shades : and so he dyed, not so much out of good-will, as to save himself from falling into the hands of enemies, which he thought would use him contumeliously.

*Plutarch* in vit. Cat. min.  
In Phædone Platonio.  
Grandia morituri verba catonis discere, ab infano multum Laudanda Magistro,  
*Perf.* Sat. 3.

But:

But when we come to contemplate one God, distinguished (and not divided) into three persons, for our sakes: in the workes of creation, redemption, and sanctification unto glory; how infinitely farre is our contemplation enlarged beyond theirs? when we meditate on the attributes of his glory, as that he is merciful, and bounteous, and the rest: in a word, that he is *light* and *love*; which are unfolded only in the Scriptures: what an infinite of tenters are there, to extend this wooff, untill there be no more place, nor space, but that which runs into eternity?

Act. 17.

Ps. 139. 15. &c.

When we shall consider what he is in respect to us: *In whom we live, and move, and have our beings: who covered us, when we were made in secret; and in whose book our members were all written, being yet unperfect,* who was not only the Father of our Fathers; but much more then a Father to every one of us in particular; giving us all the good that ever we did enjoy, and is never weary of it: but above all, who is our redeemer, and the Father of Our *Lord*, and husband, together with himself, God blessed for ever. O admirable contemplations! O what peculiar pleasures do belong to this adoption! O the ecstasies of study, love and wonder! what can there be wanting, if we think but of the least of these, to raise our soules up to a near alliance with the Angels, that are in Heaven? it is from this doctrine, that the soul comes to have her wings full summed, that were hardly impt before, that did but hover about ( indeed ) in clouds of darkness.

What



What though the Poets boast of raptures ? they terminate in a Woman: and for the most part, *desinit in piscem mulier formosa superne*. What though the heathen Priests seemed to have some familiarity with the Gods, in whose Temples they did attend, and serve ? they were usually deadly sick with it. Let *Cicero* please himself about an immortal name: we should not know him from another man, though we should meet him: though we talk of him, he cannot hear us: and if he be not, what is he the nearer, as *Valla* argueth. Let *Cato* speak bravely of the immortality of the soul it self, since he thought it better to dye, then to protract his misery: yet none of his admirers could find in his heart to quit an indifferent life here, for the best that they could make of the other.

*Sic Just. Mart.* (ni malè meminì) retundit Poetas Ethnicos, quorum, ἀρχὴ καὶ τέλος γυνή.  
Horat. de art. poet.

But since it is another kind of immortality, that the *Christian* faith doth grasp, and gaspe after: no wonder if the excellency of so sublime an object do draw them up far above the state of other men, that seem to have more in them, then themselves: and give them other manner of fruitions, which are *unspeakable and full of glory*, without deceit, or stilt: in a word, that it filleth them not only with a true contempt of death (which the other do but feign) but impelleth them to triumph over it, and often to provoke it in the way of Martyrdom. Let us move yet but one step further, that we may reach the goal.

Others are not much addicted unto contemplation (but rather leave it as a fancy to them that like it better) yet they will not quit their own pretensions unto happiness.

ness. They had rather have it placed in an active, or a quiet life, supported with such means, and aides, as may best administer unto either of them, as they themselves should choose. Be it so, we are at all points ready to shew where happiness is, sooner then any other, for *Godliness is profitable unto all things, having the promises of this life, and of that which is to come.*

1 Tim. 4. 8.

Carnal *wisdom* seems to teach how to enjoy, and manage the goods of fortune but it cannot get them: whereas the true *wisdom* hath length of dayes in her right hand, and in her left riches and honour.

Prov. 3. 16.

Carnal *wisdom* teacheth to enjoy them alone, but this how to enjoy God together with them, which is much more. *Carnal Wisdom* teacheth a pretended equanimity, and indifference in adversity (which it cannot possibly prevent) but it can no more do it, then it can satisfie thirst, and hunger with dainty words; whereas this *wisdom* and *prudence*, whereof we speak, affords such a true support within, as hath really made many (and still doth) to *rejoyce in tribulations.*

2 Cor. 6. 10. 7 4  
Rom. 5. 3.

And if you ask me what this inward support is. I answer, it is the spirit of Union, through faith, whereof I gave you but an hint before, indeed, how the Saints are united mystically unto *Christ*, and have thereby *unspeakable* enjoyments, and *full of glory*: we cannot shew in Act, because it is internal, and a mystery: but it plainly appeareth by the effects: for, they are oft transported in their private prayers, who have *Communion with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ*, they have admirable gifts when they come abroad. That Spirit, which we account as their higher souls or by way of

1 Pet. 1. 8.  
1 Joh. 1. 3. 4.

emi-

*eminence*, sheweth wonders, when occasion draws it forth to outward observation. But it is *not according to the will of man* : neither of him that hath it, always to exert the power of it, nor of others to make collusion with it : but rather, it makes but little shew to the world (till God himself do set it forth to action, or to patience) because it aboundeth most in mortified men : who being *filled with the spirit*, look never the fuller for it ; and while they are invincible in the Faith, do but shew to be the meekest men. And so each one doth acknowledge for himself, when he professeth with St. Paul, *The Life which I seem to live in the flesh, I live not ; but my life is hid with Christ in God.* Eph. 5. 18. Gal. 2. 20. Col. 3. 3.

To conclude (since we must needs be reduced unto some bounds, though our subject cannot ) here is the highest pitch of this excellency, which hath no perch below the clouds ; but pierceth into the *Empyrean* heavens. This *wisdom* doth secure us of a better life (while it is so far from diminishing, that it added unto this, as I have shewed you) but *irreligion* hazzards both, upon a fond supposition ; what if there be no resurrection ? yet, by piety, you shall live more happily here, then without it. The mad-man that had great joys to go unto the Port, and to see the Ships come in, conceiting that they were all his own, proved but melancholy, when he was cured. Better it were to be deceived with *godliness, which is profitable unto all things*, then to be deluded by the world, that yeildeth no security, or felicity to them, that stick the closest to it.

But what if there be a *resurrection* at the last ? *insipientis erit tum dicere, non putaram.* It will be but folly to plead then ; I had not thought, that it would have  
E proved



proved so. And it will be too late to put in any other plea: for this very *wisdom* will then come in, in evidence; and after speak like a judge from the bench, in this manner. *Since ye have set at nought all my Counsel, and would none of my reproof, I also will laugh at your calamity, I will mock when your fear cometh; when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction as a whirlwind; when distresse, and anguish cometh on you. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer: they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me.*

This is the summe of my exhortation, and my argument. *To day while it is called to day, let us hearken to the voice of wisdom, let us claspe this prudence, and never part with it: but let us keep it so, that it may keep us for ever. And the peace of God which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts, and minds through Christ Jesus. Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great Shepherd of the Sheep, through the Blood of the Everlasting Covenant, make you perfect in every good work, to do his will, working in you that, which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ. To whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost be praise and glory for ever and ever.*

A M E N.

